

# Rare Animals of Louisiana

## Eastern Spotted Skunk

*Spilogale putorius*

**Rarity Rank:** S1/G5

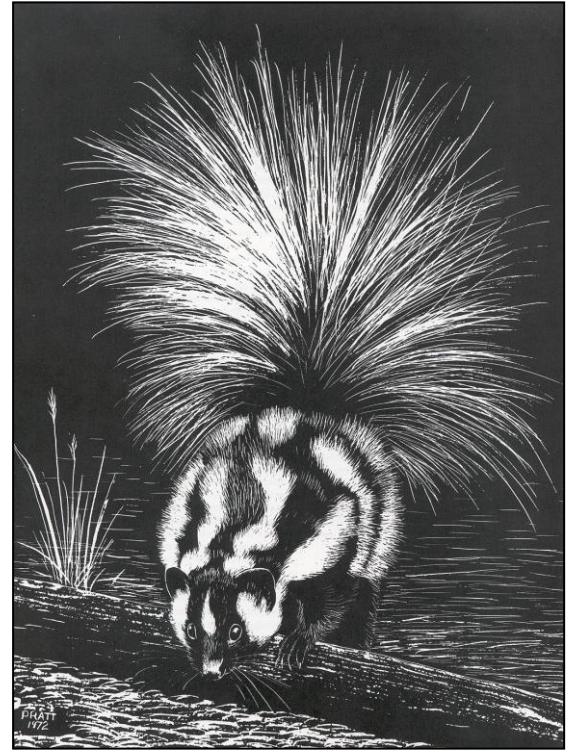
	1	2	3	4	5
State					
Global					
	imperiled		rare		secure

### Identification:

- Relatively small skunk with jet-black pelage
- Identifiable by white markings including 4 pairs of streaks as well as spotty marks on top of the head, chin, back and rump and sides of tail
- Tail has white tip

### Habitat:

- Forested and well covered areas are preferred, including open or brushy areas and prairie outcrops
- Dens are protected sites and can be burrows abandoned by other mammals, under brush piles, in hollow logs, and under buildings



*Spilogale putorius* from Lowery, 1972, The Mammals of Louisiana and Its Adjacent Waters, pg 434; Portrait by H. Douglas Pratt, 1972.

### Food habits:

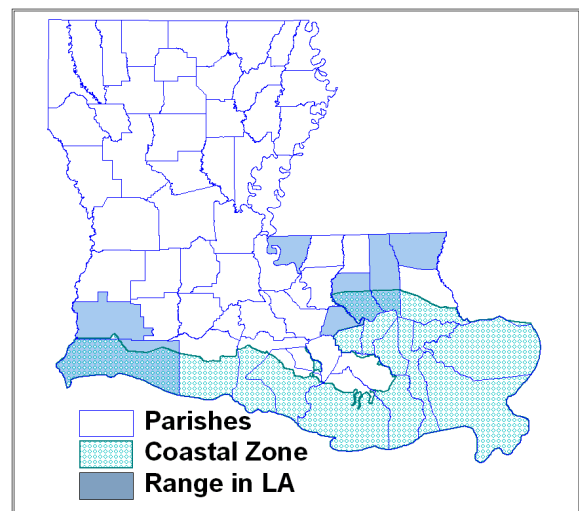
- A variety of plants and animals
- Animals may include insects such as grasshoppers and beetles, frogs, crawfish and even occasional small birds and eggs
- Fruits and corn are some of the plants that are eaten

### Range:

- A patchy distribution ranging as far north as southern British Columbia and northern Idaho, South Dakota, Minnesota, Kentucky, West Virginia, and parts of Pennsylvania. Also, as far south as Costa Rica
- Excluded in the Atlantic Coastal Plain, West Sonora, and Central America

### Reproduction:

- Known to mate in the winter
- Average litter size is 4 but can be up to 9
- One litter per year and young are born between April and July
- Weaning takes about 8 weeks and offspring are sexually mature by 9 to 10 months



Range based on occurrences in Natural Heritage database

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## **Threats:**

- Vehicular collisions may be a danger
- Habitat fragmentation and destruction
- Lack of tolerance by human population

## **Beneficial Management Practices:**

- Educate population on beneficial aspects of skunks and general habits
- Maintain populations through habitat preservation and reformation

## **LA River Basins:**

Pearl, Pontchartrain, Mississippi, Mermentau, Calcasieu, Sabine

## **References:**

Lowery, Jr., George H. The Mammals of Louisiana and Its Adjacent Waters. Kingsport: Kingsport P, Inc., 1974. 423-427.

NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. 2006. Version 6.1 . Arlington, Virginia, USA: NatureServe. Available: <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: June 20, 2007 ).